**Selection Policy Evaluation**

**Academy School District 20**

**Academy District 20 Selection Policies**

The district’s policy for selection of materials is pasted below. The policy is clear and concise and covers the issues of aligning materials with content standards, making sure materials are age appropriate and that they are objective and diverse in nature. The policy covers the majority of areas outlined in the ALA Workbook for Selection Policy Writing. I think these policies cover the major educational criteria and leave room for the librarian to make the selection that is right for his/her library.

I think the policies would be improved by adding some of the more aesthetic criteria outlined by the ALA, such as reputation and significance of author, producer and publisher, high artistic quality and timeliness. It would also be good to have a statement requiring at least one reading of a review of the item by librarian or school personnel. This is indirectly covered in Section 2, Part A, but it doesn’t exactly say to consult a professional review source. This is an “understood” policy by district librarians, and it has been mentioned by my supervisor, but it is not explicitly outlined in the policy.

**Responsibility for Selection of Library Materials**   
While selection of materials may involve many people (administration, teachers, staff, students, parents, and community persons), the responsibility for coordinating the selection of most instructional materials and making the recommendation for purchase rests with certified media personnel, principals, or supervisors. For the purpose of this rule, the term "media specialist" includes certified and classified librarians as well as other appropriate staff members responsible for selection of media.  
**Selection of Materials**   
A. The following criteria will be used as they apply:  
1. Materials shall support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the district and the district content standards, benchmarks and expectations, and will meet the informational and interest needs of students.  
2. Materials shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, and social development of the students for whom the materials are selected.  
3. Materials shall be selected that will present facts in an objective manner.  
4. Literary quality, technical merit, formatting and page layout, and aesthetic characteristics should be considered as integral components in the evaluation of all media formats for selection.  
5. Materials shall be chosen to foster respect for all people, and shall realistically represent our pluralistic society. Materials shall provide a global perspective and support diversity.  
6. Library materials should be free of bias and stereotype. Library materials concerning religious, economic, social, and political content should inform rather than indoctrinate.  
7. Materials shall be selected for their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses.  
8. Library media materials should be available in a variety of formats, e.g. print, nonprint, electronic, multimedia, to meet the needs and learning styles of a diverse student population.  
9. The selection of materials on controversial issues will be directed toward maintaining a balanced collection representing various views.  
10. Selection of materials will reflect placing principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in order to assure a high quality, comprehensive collection appropriate to the school community.  
  
**Procedure for Selection**   
A. In selecting materials for purchase for the media center, the librarian, media specialist, principal, or other trained staff members will evaluate the existing collection and the curriculum needs and will consult reputable, professionally prepared selection aids and other appropriate sources. For the purpose of this rule the term "media" includes all materials considered part of the library collection (if any) which are not text materials.  
B. Selection is an ongoing process which shall include the removal of materials no longer appropriate and the replacement of lost and worn materials still of educational value.   
C. Selections are forwarded to the principal for approval.

**Reconsideration of Materials**

The district has a lengthy and throrough reconsideration process, located at this address... <http://www.asd20.org/education/components/whatsnew/default.php?sectiondetailid=43008&id=2506&viewType=detail>

I believe it covers all of the necessary steps for reconsideration. I know that this process has been used many times over the years and it seems to work well as written. I like the fact that if removal of an item is determined, it is only removed from THAT school where it was appealed, and not from the entire district. I believe this leaves a great deal of autonomy for schools and librarians to choose materials that match the needs of their community.

One weakness in this policy is the clarity of the committee members voting on the outcome. It lists the Library Media Specialist as a member and then adds a “Media Services Specialist” who does not get a vote. I am unclear as to who this person is. I am guessing that this would be the Administration’s Media Specialist in charge of librarians, but I am not sure. Clarifying this position in the document would be helpful.

**Selection of Non-print Materials**

Locating the policy on non-print materials was difficult. I found this information embedded in the Selection of Instructional Materials and Textbooks.

Supplementary instructional materials shall be defined as any instructional materials other than primary materials including, but not limited to, books, novels (supplementary reading and informational materials), periodicals, newspapers, slides and transparencies, models, filmstrips, films, maps, records, audiotapes, laser disks, DVDs, CD-ROMs, and software which relate directly to the curriculum and are available for teacher use and/or student selection. Supplementary materials are used to provide extension, enrichment, support to the curriculum and are used for less than one-fourth of the instruction of a course or subject area. Supplementary materials are not adopted by the Board but must be approved by the building principal. These materials should be age appropriate and reviewed using worksheet IIAC-E-3. As deemed appropriate by the principal, parent notification/permission will be obtained for student use.   
  
In keeping with the intent of the district's Selection of Supplementary Instructional Materials Procedure, district staff will thoughtfully and purposefully integrate new information resources throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students for their appropriate use. This will include a comprehensive curriculum for grades K-12 that teaches students how to safely access, communicate, and interact via the Internet.   
  
**Guidelines for Selection**   
  
All three options as described herein shall follow the procedures outlined in Procedure IIAC-R-3.   
Instructional materials should be selected with the intent of advancing District 20's educational objectives and contributing toward continuity and articulation of the curriculum.   
Documents to be consulted as appropriate in the selection process are:   
1. District 20 Board of Education governance policies   
2. District 20 Administrative Policies and Procedures   
3. District 20 Board adopted content standards, benchmarks and expectations; and,   
4. Existing national and state documents in respective curricular areas.

One weakness of these policies is that they are extremely difficult to locate on the District website. They are in a section that does not necessarily include the LMC. They should be included within or near the policies on selection of LMC materials. They should follow similar guidelines to book selection policies. Accessibility and clarity would greatly improve these policies.

**Acquisition Policies and Procedures**

I was unable to locate any policy on acquiring materials. These documents may exist, but are of little use if school personnel cannot find them. They were not included in any of my “New Librarian” guidelines or suggestions. To my knowledge, each school librarian is on their own with regards to where to find and purchase materials. In my experience, I was given verbal suggestions by fellow librarians and we were given an in-service where several reps from local book vendors presented to us, but the decision to use a vendor was left with us. While I appreciate the autonomy, a specific acquisition policy would be a useful guide and could save a librarian from confusion and trouble down the road.

The lack of policy in this arena is a definite weakness for the district. A clear acquisition process could save time and reduce the need for reconsideration of materials in the future.

*Part l --District level selection policies and procedures*

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| **Points** | **20** | **16** | **12** | **0** |
| District policies and procedures are evaluated | All appropriate district policies thoughtfully evaluated | All appropriate district policies evaluated | A few appropriate district policies evaluated | Most policies missing |
| Strengths of district policy are discussed | Extensive reasons given for policy strengths identified | Policy strengths identified with some explanation | Obvious strengths not identified or no explanation given | No strengths identified |
| Weaknesses of district policy are discussed | Extensive reasons given for policy weaknesses identified | Policy weaknesses identified with some identification | Obvious weaknesses not identified or no explanation given | No Weaknesses identified |

***Self-evaluation based on Rubric : 60/60***